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ABSTRACT

Many parents today struggle to maintain a sense of closeness and to create an environment that is nurturing and supportive. Four family responsibilities can help parents strengthen family unity and help their children build strong relationships and values. First, families should help children see every person as the image of God. Having faith in God is identified as the most important aspect of a strong family and the key to developing strong moral values. Parents can instill a sense of faith in their children by sharing in religious events, encouraging family participation in community service, and maintaining a peaceful and harmonious home. Second, families need to educate their children by taking an active interest in their child's education, helping them to successfully complete homework, showing support for their child's teachers, being active in their child's school especially as the children get older, and taking responsibility for teaching social skills. Third, families should provide a loving home for their children. Parents can show warmth and caring by hugging them and reassuring them of parental love and concern for their welfare, building happy memories through extended family activities, developing traditions, having fun and eating together, taking pictures, showing support for each other's activities, and sharing emotional times. Fourth, families should help children to participate successfully in society. Parents can hold family meetings to discuss outings, family rules, and accomplishments; model and teach effective conflict resolution; make children aware of current events and have family discussions; and define and respect personal boundaries. (Author/KB)

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